September 11, 2001
Whitehorse International Airport
Emergency

Public Findings Report

Yukon
Government

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Introduction

The terrorist activities in New York City and Washington D.C. on the morning of September 11, 2001 greatly influenced Yukoners' sensitivities towards the emergency situation experienced at the Whitehorse International Airport.

As many had seen television reporting of the two aircraft crashing into the World Trade Centre in advance of the events here in Whitehorse, these shocking images heightened public anticipation during the emergency at the Whitehorse Airport. Moreover, as the local emergency situation was unfolding, many envisioned the worst case scenario taking place here which raised emotions and contributed to traumatic sensitivities in relation to these events.

This report covers many dimensions related to the events of September 11 and what has taken place since then to improve emergency preparedness and response in the Yukon. Specifically the report provides a recounting of the events as they unfolded, the agencies involved in the response, the timeframes within which they reacted, deficiencies in response activities, and actions underway to address these deficiencies.

This report has been issued to the public to provide a factual recounting of the day's events. While some Whitehorse residents have already provided their comments and suggestions, all Yukoners are encouraged to provide their suggestions for improving emergency preparedness and response.

Emergency planning has been underway in each Yukon community for decades. These plans are reviewed and tested through exercises to ensure their effectiveness. Up until September 11th, Yukon emergencies were typically forest fires, floods, earthquakes, loss of electrical power, dangerous goods spills and similar situations. Plans to deal with terrorism activities do exist, however there was not a multi-agency plan to deal with the events as they unfolded that day. New planning activities are now underway to address this and similar potential events should they occur again.

World events are also creating a need to monitor potential new emergencies that may occur here in the Yukon. Working in partnership with local, regional and federal agencies, Yukon's emergency response community is reviewing existing plans to ensure the continued safety of Yukon citizens and critical infrastructure.

Executive Summary

"On September 11th – the world changed."
While this phrase has become cliché in recent weeks, it is accurate to describe how Sept. 11th has affected emergency planning around the world.

The emergency event of Sept. 11th at the Whitehorse Airport was a new situation that responding agencies had not anticipated in their planning activities to date. The terrorist attacks in New York and Washington D.C. have brought a new level of threat to the North American continent that emergency planners are now factoring into their emergency planning.

The chain of events leading up to the arrival of the two Korean Airlines 747s was unique in aviation history. Never before has the airspace over the United States and Canada been closed to all but military air traffic. At the time of implementing the airspace restrictions there were estimated to be 1100 commercial aircraft in flight over or approaching Canada. Coordinating the safe re-direction and arrival of this many aircraft was a significant achievement in and of itself.

Whitehorse Airport was informed by Transport Canada to expect the diversion of up to ten large-capacity aircraft. In the early hours of Sept. 11th, attending to the arrival of these aircraft was the first priority.

Emergency Social Services (ESS) were called into action to prepare for potentially five thousand air passengers that would remain here until the airspace restrictions were lifted. Plans were being developed to house, feed and care for a large volume of international travelers.

Further planning was focused on the physical limitations of the airport infrastructure. Staging areas, weight limitations for runways and surrounding areas, logistical planning for re-fuel and mechanical maintenance, runway geometry and on-ground aircraft movements were all issues that needed to be considered in the short-term planning phase.

Customs and Immigration indicated there would be a significant drain on their resources to process this many passengers coupled with interim emergency security directives from Transport Canada for inspecting checked and carry-on baggage by police. Clearly, the departments and agencies that conduct this work prepared for an extremely busy day.

As the various agencies were preparing for the arrival of the aircraft, information from the Department of National Defense (DND) to the RCMP revealed a Korean Airlines 747 was underway to Whitehorse and was suspected of being hijacked. This was a turning point in how the rest of the response was delivered over the next two hours. As hijacking is a criminal action, RCMP assumed the lead role for this event.

As more information from national security agencies became available regarding the suspect 747, conflicts were found in this information. Transport Canada and the

Department of National Defense maintained the Korean 747 was under hijack status, while NORAD said that it was not under hijack but rather a low fuel alert. NORAD later agreed that the aircraft in question might be hijacked.

Faced with conflicting reports from senior agencies, Whitehorse RCMP, acting in the interest of public safety, decided to err on the side of caution and considered the aircraft to be hijacked with a low fuel situation until investigations proved otherwise.

The other eight aircraft that were to be directed to Whitehorse were re-directed and accommodated at other Canadian airports.

The question of why this potentially dangerous aircraft was directed to Whitehorse rather than another airport remains unanswered by senior national agencies, the Federal Aviation Agency (FAA), NORAD, and Transport Canada. Given the international security protocols presently in place due to potential terrorism activity, many of these agencies have become even more cryptic in their public information, especially to requests for information regarding terrorism activities. As a result, questions about the decision-making process to re-direct the two Korean aircraft to Whitehorse have not been answered in any significant detail. It is expected that greater detail on this will not be forthcoming from these agencies in the short-term.

The next major influence in how the response was delivered was the estimated time of arrival of the suspect 747. At 10:45 a.m. NORAD advised Whitehorse RCMP that the suspect 747 was due to arrive in Whitehorse in one hour. At 10:55 a.m. Transport Canada advised RCMP that the suspect 747 would be arriving at the Whitehorse airport under American and Canadian military escort within twelve minutes.

This reduction in time dramatically changed the work underway by the RCMP for how they advised schools and selected buildings to evacuate. As available time was short, RCMP attended to the priority of removing school children from schools and evacuating buildings that would be considered probable targets for terrorist action. These were identified as the Elijah Smith federal building, the Yukon government's main administration building and Whitehorse City Hall.

For planning activities, losing this hour removed the time required to implement a more thoroughly coordinated evacuation following established emergency plans and to alert the public to the situation through local radio media. Short cuts were made by the RCMP to provide evacuation notices to schools and the government buildings in an effort to speed the evacuation process.

Public Information

A principal difficulty encountered at the early stages of the event was to ensure the public was advised of the rapidly changing situation through the local radio stations. The RCMP was the lead agency and as such provided public information to our local media.

Initial public information announcements were focused on informing Whitehorse citizens that school children were being evacuated from their schools and were being sent home. Live interviews with RCMP communications staff were also utilized at the early stages to add greater detail and to respond to questions from media reporters. Throughout the morning RCMP spokespersons were interviewed on local radio stations with updates as they occurred.

It is recognized that a better job could have been done in providing the public with information on transportation options, traffic conditions and recommended routes out of the downtown area. Alternate emergency school locations were also something many parents have said should have been broadcast during the emergency.

The public relied on local radio media for information and reacted literally to observations made by some radio commentators. Some of these comments were speculative and incorrect which contributed to the public's state of alarm.

The emergency response delivered on Sept. 11th was correct, safe and effective. The overarching difficulty was the very limited timeframe in which to deliver the response. Established emergency alerting protocols were ignored in order to effect a rapid notification to evacuate schools and selected buildings. Apart from this variation, all other aspects of the emergency response were delivered according to established procedures and protocols.

Sept. 11th Aftermath

Directly following the Sept. 11th airport emergency, all response agencies involved met to de-brief how the event was handled. A compulsory activity that takes place directly following every emergency event, the de-briefing takes a critical view of what went right and what went wrong in delivering the response.

Meetings were also conducted with local radio media, Yukon government staff, and individual Yukoners on how they perceived the emergency and response of Sept. 11th.

The purpose behind these meetings was to gain a greater understanding of how people were impacted by the event, what can be done to improve our level of preparedness to deal with potential emergencies, and what can be done to improve the response to emergency situations when they occur.

These meetings provided many suggestions for improvements that are being considered by the appropriate departments and agencies. Key recommendations are listed later in this report.

The September 11th emergency highlighted the lack of emergency planning at the individual level. It is apparent that many families and businesses do not have plans in place to deal with emergency situations that may occur.

While government agencies and responders are reviewing and updating emergency plans, individual citizens, businesses, commercial property owners and others should also consider developing emergency plans so that in the event of an emergency, they and their families, customers and tenants know what to do to maintain their safety and security.

Local media, Emergency Measures Branch, the RCMP and other response agencies, will be forming an Emergency Information Committee to deal with finding improvements to emergency information processes.

Some suggestions received to date require some detailed research to determine the optimum solution. An example of this is the suggestion to implement a wide-area alerting system for the City of Whitehorse. A community the size of Whitehorse does not have the same opportunity for an emergency siren similar to those found in some rural communities. As Whitehorse is large in area and is made up of separate neighborhoods well removed from each other, a network of sirens may be the best solution to this situation, but a detailed analysis of the options will be required.

Public Input – Recommendations and Suggestions

This report provides a recounting of the events on Sept. 11th to provide a foundation of facts as they occurred. Yukoners are invited to provide their comments and suggestions on the emergency situation and the response delivered on that day.

Recommendations to improve Yukon's emergency preparedness and response capability are always welcomed by the public.

Contact information is located at the back of the report.

Canadian Emergency Management Overview

Emergency response in Canada follows a common process designed to be efficient, flexible and effective.

How the System Works

Following the practice that has evolved in Canada, and in keeping with the country's legal and constitutional framework, responsibility for initial action in an emergency lies with the individual - who should be prepared to do what is reasonably possible to protect life and property. The different orders of government only step in as their resources and response capabilities are needed to control and mitigate the situation: if the individual cannot cope, the municipal services respond.

Mayors and other elected heads of local governments are responsible for ensuring that emergency plans exist within their jurisdictions and that they are exercised regularly. Most emergencies occur within, and are dealt with effectively by a municipality and or the local level of government.

If the municipality cannot manage to respond effectively, the province or territory is expected to come to its aid. Provincial and territorial governments are responsible for coordinating the interface with the municipalities.

If a province or territory needs help, the federal government's aid is formally requested, usually - but not necessarily- through the Office of Critical Infrastructure Protection and Emergency Preparedness (OCIPEP).

The federal government intervenes only when asked or when the emergency clearly impacts on areas of federal jurisdiction such as floods or fires on federal lands, air crashes at federal airports, or in a national emergency.

When the federal government does intervene, unless a lead Minister has been designated in advance - a Minister, and hence a department, may be named to assume the lead role and coordinate the collective effort of the federal government. Usually, the department whose normal responsibilities most closely relate to the circumstances of the disaster is given the lead. The federal response effort is normally conducted under the overall direction and control of the responsible provincial government or, in the event of a primarily federal or national emergency, in close collaboration with provincial responders.

Yukon Emergency Preparedness

Emergency Plans

Emergency plans are established for many diverse situations that may occur anywhere in the territory. These plans are developed at the local community level by the agencies and governments that will typically deal with them. The plans are tested on occasion through exercises to evaluate the effectiveness of the responses and to ensure the people that are involved know how the plans work.

Each level of government has emergency plans designed to mesh with other governments' emergency plans should the need for mutual assistance become necessary. The Yukon government has a Government-Wide Emergency Plan (GWEP) that identifies the emergency responsibilities of the government departments with the goal of continuing to provide programs and services to the public and to ensure the continued safety of our citizens and visitors. Each government department also has an emergency plan that is a more detailed description of their roles and responsibilities in emergency situations.

Emergency planning looks at possible hazard situations that may typically occur due to geography, weather and other environmental influences, infrastructure limitations, available resources, and other criteria that indicate a probability for an emergency situation. For example, the Yukon is located within a geographic region that experiences a moderate level of earthquake activity. Similarly, the cold weather situations of the winter months and the flooding conditions of our rivers in the spring determine the need for emergency plans to deal with these possible emergency situations.

Planning is in place to evacuate communities due to a number of potential dangers including forest fire threats, flooding, earthquake damage and similar hazards. Many of these emergency plans have been used and updated over the years to deal with situations that have occurred in recent history.

Until now, Yukon's emergency plans were created under the assumption that these emergencies relate to peacetime conditions. Now that potential terrorism activities have been added to the inventory of possible emergencies, new sensitivities, scenarios, and procedures must be considered in the regular review and updating of emergency plans.

Emergency plans are designed to be flexible because each emergency situation is unique and may require different response tactics. For the most part, emergency plans indicate a recommended process for dealing with a given emergency situation rather than a step-by-step course of action. For example, a long-term power failure may not present significant problems for a community during the summer months, but the same event during a cold spell in the winter poses a different situation that must be attended to in a different manner. Similarly, a response may be different in each community due to the resources available, the scale of the infrastructure and the nature of the problem.

Many diverse influences dictate the response to an emergency. Response plans consider these variables and how they may impact on the effectiveness of the response.

Seasonal differences pose one of the greatest challenges in planning for emergency situations. The cold weather creates a new dimension to consider when plans are created. Transporting people, the ability to operate machinery, repairing critical infrastructure, available resource assets and similar criteria are factors that are weighed by seasonal influences and how to attend to the emergency.

Following every emergency response, the planning teams and response agencies gather together to review the effectiveness of that particular response and determine improvements that can be made to the plans as a result of the lessons learned while attending to the recent emergency.

Emergency Exercises

As emergency situations do not happen regularly, training exercises are conducted to test the emergency response capabilities in a mock setting.

Planning exercises bring together the various governments and agencies that are called upon to mitigate emergency situations. Testing the plans may be conducted in a couple of ways. A basic approach is called a 'tabletop exercise' in which the players develop a scenario that can occur in their community. The scenario includes a number of situations that are very probable to occur and may include unique situations that, while rare, may influence the emergency response. As the scenario unfolds, the players state how they would respond utilizing the resources at their disposal under the time challenges and other real-life situational demands and constraints that are written into the scenario.

Large-scale emergency exercises are often conducted to test a greater number of variables and to broaden participation in a more life-like setting. An example of this is the City of Whitehorse's Downstream 1 and 2 exercises conducted in June and October of 1999. Downstream 1 was a tabletop exercise where participants assumed their roles around a conference table and 'talked the response through.' Downstream 2 involved actual resources being deployed in a real-time situation. Roads were closed, staff was physically deployed and they acted as if a real emergency was underway. Literally hundreds of people were directly involved as participants with this exercise.

Emergency Training

Personnel training is an on-going activity of all emergency response agencies. Not limited to the men and women that work the front line of an emergency event, training is also provided for many behind-the-scenes roles that are vital to an effective emergency response. Police, fire and ambulance staff receives training in their regular daily job activities. They also receive training for when emergencies take place and their roles and duties may be required to change depending on the nature of the emergency.

A wide variety of training programs exists to ensure there are emergency workers who can perform their duties safely and effectively. From basic First Aid training to emergency site management, telecommunications, critical incident stress management, dangerous goods transportation and handling and many other skills and techniques,

training is an on-going activity that aims to ensure the correct skills are in place to respond to emergency situations.

Creating New Emergency Plans

As the Yukon and the world changes, so do the emergency planning activities. New developments present new challenges that must be considered when preparing to deal with an emergency situation. Communities change in many ways over the years as roadways are altered, commercial and residential developments are created and new infrastructure is added.

An example is found in adding new telecommunication services to rural communities. As new communication options become available, emergency planners must consider how these can be effectively used during emergency situations and the local emergency plans are then updated to include this new resource.

A new industrial development may present increased risks to a community due to the nature of its business. This may include dealing with chemicals used by the industry, increased freight transportation and the potential for dangerous goods spills. There may also be a need to consider how the local fire department would attend to a fire at this facility and what specialized equipment they might require to do this safely.

There are many developments and new influences within any community that need to be considered for potential emergency situations and the best way to deal with them if they should occur. These influences include the need to maintain an appropriate level of skilled people in the community to respond to emergency situations. Trained responders are always needed in each community as people move away and take their skills and training with them to new locations. There is always a recruitment drive to enlist new community emergency responders for a variety of positions.

The events of September 11th have created the need to update the emergency plans for dealing with terrorist threats. There are existing plans that deal with terrorist actions, but they did not previously include large aircraft hijackings arriving from foreign lands. Historically terrorist-hijacking situations redirected aircraft to other countries but the suicidal methodology utilized on domestic aircraft on Sept. 11th was unprecedented. These plans are now being updated based on what we learned from that experience.

Similarly, new training and planning is well underway to deal with other potential emergency situations that the Yukon has never been exposed to before. Bio-terrorism, while somewhat improbable here in the Yukon, is something that we now require a plan for.

Mutual Aid Agreements

Emergency planning involves many participants that are not normally considered by the public. The Yukon has mutual aid agreements with our neighboring jurisdictions of Alaska, British Columbia and the Northwest Territories, and the states of Washington Idaho and Oregon. These agreements are in place to assist with emergency situations when they occur in these locations or to receive their assistance when we need their help.

Alaskan communities along the Lynn Canal rely on Whitehorse for many day-to-day services such as shopping and in some cases, hospital care. Our mutual aid agreements provide the opportunity to utilize their resources and expertise during emergency situations. Yukon search and rescue teams have assisted Alaskan emergency operations and in turn, Alaskan resources have assisted in Yukon-based rescue activities.

September 11, 2001 Event Summary

Prior to 10:30 a.m.
As Yukoners awoke to the news of the terrorist actions on September 11th, Whitehorse RCMP were already at work planning for the potential increase in their duties related to these events.

The first order of planning for the Whitehorse RCMP detachment was focused on two primary issues – assisting Canada Customs and Immigration with maintaining the security and integrity of our border with Alaska, and preparing to assist other agencies during the arrival of international aircraft diverted to Whitehorse.

Recognizing that there was not an emergency situation at this time, the activities of the various agencies were determined by their regular daily duties and responsibilities.

8:15 a.m. Transport Canada advised that there was a potential for numerous aircraft to be re-directed to Whitehorse airport as a result of the US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) closing American airspace. Additional aircraft arriving in Whitehorse could translate into hundreds of displaced travelers that would need to be cared for while the airspace closure was in effect.

RCMP brought in additional staff to assist with the preparations and placed all remaining members of their staff on standby alert. Throughout the event, Whitehorse RCMP and airport management was in regular contact with a number of national and international agencies directly involved with the emergency situations surrounding the re-directed aircraft.

9:42 a.m. RCMP advised Emergency Measures Branch (EMB) and Emergency Social Services (ESS) of the potential inbound aircraft. ESS began planning to prepare for the arrival of a large number of travelers. This planning consisted of determining the scope of what would be required to care for a large number of foreign passengers for an undetermined length of time.

Accommodation and feeding as well as medical attention and the needs of the elderly, infants and youth were considered in this planning activity. Other issues that required planning included grief counseling for the passengers, clothing, language challenges and the need for translator services, local transportation for a large number of people and registration and inquiry services in conjunction with Canada Customs and Immigration. The Whitehorse Cadet Camp and Whitehorse schools were considered for housing large numbers of people and planning began to prepare for this possibility.

At **9:45 a.m.** Whitehorse RCMP advised Premier Duncan, who was acting for Community and Transportation Services Minister Pam Buckway, of the situation as it existed at that time. RCMP noted their first priorities were to assist Canada Customs and Immigration at the Whitehorse airport and to assist other agencies involved with the

arrival of international aircraft diverted to Whitehorse. The next priority for the RCMP was to maintain the security and integrity of our border with Alaska.

RCMP attended the Whitehorse Airport to meet with airport management to discuss the arrival of these aircraft and to make preparations. An influx of numerous large-capacity aircraft brought a new series of challenges for logistical planning in handling the physical aspects of all of these aircraft within the limited space available on runways and staging areas at the Whitehorse airport. Further discussions on customs inspections and the processing and legal entry criteria for a large number of foreign travelers revealed a significant number of resources would be required.

10:00 a.m. Anchorage downtown area was ordered evacuated due to a suspected-hijacked Korean Airlines 747.

10:00 a.m. City of Whitehorse received a request from Whitehorse Airport for buses.

Condor Air 767 Flight # DE2066 arrives on schedule. 9 crewmembers and 215 passengers disembark and proceed through Canada Customs.

10:20 a.m. Whitehorse Airport was advised that as many as ten diverted flights may be arriving in Whitehorse in the next few hours.

10:25 a.m. Whitehorse RCMP were informed by Winnipeg RCMP of information received from 17 Wing Airforce - Department of National Defense (DND) that Korean Airline's Flight 085 was indicating a hijack situation and that more information was forthcoming.

10:30 a.m. RCMP requested City of Whitehorse Bylaw to report to the airport for traffic control.

10:35 a.m. Department of National Defense advised Whitehorse RCMP of a potentially hijacked Korean Airlines 747 en route to Whitehorse airport. This advisory was a turning point in responding to the potential emergency. As the response activities now changed to deal with a criminal activity, RCMP assumed the lead role status for the response.

Over the next forty minutes there was conflicting information from national agencies to the RCMP regarding the status of the suspect hijacked aircraft. Some of this information was contradictory and added new challenges to the short-term planning underway.

Transport Canada and the Department of National Defense maintained that the Korean 747 was under hijack status, while NORAD said that it was not hijack but rather a low fuel alert. NORAD later agreed that the aircraft in question might be hijacked.

Faced with conflicting reports from senior agencies, Whitehorse RCMP, acting in the interest of public safety, decided to err on the side of caution and considered the aircraft to be hijacked with a low fuel situation until investigations proved otherwise.

The other eight aircraft that were directed to Whitehorse were re-directed again and were accommodated at other Canadian airports.

At **10:45 a.m.** NORAD advised Whitehorse RCMP that the suspect 747 was due to arrive in Whitehorse **in one hour**. In planning terms, this hour would have provided enough time to implement evacuation plans through the Department of Education's established emergency processes. Further, the hour would have provided sufficient time to alert the public through local radio media to the situation and a more thoroughly coordinated evacuation could have been implemented.

At **10:50 a.m.** Premier Duncan was updated on activities underway.

At **10:55 a.m.** Transport Canada advised the RCMP that the suspect 747 would be arriving at the Whitehorse airport **within twelve minutes** under American and Canadian military jet escort. This reduction in time dramatically changed the work underway by the RCMP to advise schools and selected buildings to evacuate. As available time was short, RCMP attended to the priority of removing school children from schools and evacuating buildings that would be considered probable targets for terrorist action. These were identified as the Elijah Smith federal building, the Yukon government's main administration building and Whitehorse City Hall.

City of Whitehorse Bylaw and RCMP members established a security perimeter around the airport property and closed the Alaska Highway between the South Access and Two-Mile Hill. Traffic direction was also provided at the Robert Campbell Bridge into Riverdale and at the intersection of Industrial and Quartz Roads. All non-essential staff was evacuated from the airport terminal building and security measures were put into place.

Approximately half of the Condor Air passengers had been cleared through Customs when the airport terminal building was ordered evacuated. All passengers were removed from the airport and transported to local hotels without their luggage.

10:58 a.m. Premier Duncan was again advised of the rapidly changing situation and advised to evacuate the YTG administration building. RCMP noted they were calling Whitehorse schools recommending evacuation of these and had already initiated evacuation notices to YTG's administration building. The Whitehorse General Hospital was also put on alert.

11:00 a.m. RCMP advised Whitehorse Mayor Ernie Bourassa of the situation underway and directed the evacuation of City Hall. The City Manager implemented the City Emergency Plan, activated the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) and commenced the alert process.

11:05 a.m. The City Manager contacted Emergency Measures Branch (EMB) to determine if the Yukon government had declared an emergency. EMB informed the City

Manager that YTG had not yet declared an emergency, but was prepared to do so and would advise. EMB was evacuating their location next to the airport and would be re-locating to the airport emergency operations centre.

As City Hall was being evacuated at that time, City EOC activities ceased and the building was evacuated.

EMB operations center and other buildings at the airport were evacuated under direction of RCMP.

11:09 a.m. City Fire department Station #2 responded to airport to support the Airport Fire Department with the pending aircraft arrival. Additional fire fighters were called in to attend to the stations and front line operations. Also at this time, many schools were in the process of evacuating. Some schools pulled their fire alarms to effect their evacuation. Witnessing a mass of alarms simultaneously, the City Fire Hall contacted the schools and confirmed the alarms were being used to evacuate the people in their buildings. They did not respond to additional alarms during this period.

11:17 a.m. DND Winnipeg advised RCMP the hijacked aircraft was Korean Airlines KAL Flight 085 with 250 passengers onboard.

11:20 a.m. NORAD advised that KAL 085 was **not** a hijacked aircraft but rather a low-fuel emergency.

11:29 a.m. NORAD advised that KAL 085 **might** be a hijack as indicators remained suspicious. These indicators were formed by communications anomalies with the aircraft's pilot.

11:43 a.m. Korean Airlines cargo aircraft HL 7462 landed safely. The aircraft was directed to the terminal apron and ordered to shut down. The flight crew remained onboard under direction of RCMP.

11:54 a.m. Korean Airlines HL 7464 flight 085 landed safely. The aircraft was directed to the northern most portion of the apron and was ordered to shut down.

12:00 p.m. RCMP advised local media that both planes had landed safely and were under security watch. Live media interviews with RCMP stated that the immediate danger has passed as both planes were safely on the ground. The public was further advised that the airport and the Alaska Highway would remain closed until further notice.

12:07 p.m. RCMP maintained visual surveillance of the two aircraft while communications between the Whitehorse Airport control tower and the aircraft attempted to gain further information on the status within the aircraft.

12:22 p.m. A mobile staircase ramp was moved to the forward door of the passenger aircraft. The pilot of the aircraft advised nothing was wrong and that RCMP was welcome aboard to confirm the situation.

12:52 p.m. The pilot exited the aircraft and was removed to a separate location for debriefing. Confusion or miscommunication between the aircrew and the FAA resulted in a hijacking signal being given from the aircraft. There were five separate and ongoing indicators of a hijacking situation.

The Korean airline pilot returned to the passenger aircraft HL 7464 in preparation for removing the passengers.

The pilot and crew were removed from the cargo aircraft HL 7462. The RCMP then searched the cargo aircraft for unauthorized persons.

2:10 p.m. RCMP in discussion with other responding agencies agreed that no further airport evacuation order was required to continue. Airport and Alaska Highway were reopened.

The passengers were removed from the flight 085 aircraft in groups of fifty and then processed through Canada Customs and Immigration. The passengers were directed to leave all personal items onboard the aircraft including carry-on luggage, coats and similar items. These passengers were then security searched with metal detectors in accordance with established national security procedures.

6:00 p.m. The passengers were then moved to the Beringia Centre for an information session. This session explained the events in New York and Washington as they occurred, the situation that existed due to the closing of American and Canadian airspace and the plans to house and care for them while they remained in Whitehorse. They were also provided with food, as they had not had a meal in many hours.

Inquiries were made about the passengers' immediate needs for medications and the like. Infants required baby formula, diapers and similar items. Some passengers required insulin and other medications. These were delivered under the care of the Yukon's Medical Health Officer.

Plans originally called for moving the passengers to the Whitehorse Cadet Camp to house and care for them. Discussions among Emergency Social Services, EMO and RCMP determined that local hotels could accommodate the volume of passengers and plans were adjusted to move them downtown.

Local residents provided translation services to communicate with the passengers. Korean, Japanese, Chinese, Cantonese, Mandarin, and Philippine translators provided an essential service by informing the passengers that they would be cared for, fed and put up in Whitehorse hotels during their stay.

Sept. 12, 2001

03:00 a.m. Sept. 12th RCMP brought in a bomb-sniffing dog from Vancouver to search the two 747 aircraft. Cargo within the two aircraft was also searched and revealed no threat.

05:00 a.m. RCMP confirmed that a hijacking situation did not exist on either of the two aircraft. Both aircraft were security cleared and approved to depart after FAA and Transport Canada airspace restrictions were lifted and scheduling requirements had been made.

Sept. 13, 2001

Prior to the airspace restrictions being lifted, the FAA, Transport Canada and air-traffic controllers were challenged with significant congestion of passengers and aircraft at airports in every part of Canada and the USA. Never before had the entire North American airspace been closed to all civilian air traffic. Coordinating the international flight schedule was a massive task and the difficulties were witnessed here concerning the departure of the two Korean Airlines 747s.

There was information that the FAA would approve some aircraft for departure late in the evening of Sept. 12th. Korean Airlines regional office in Anchorage was coordinating with the FAA on a time for departure. After many attempts to confirm a time, it was decided that it was in the best interests of the passengers to wait until the following day to schedule a departure.

There were seven attempts to have the two 747s prepared and cleared for take-off, but in the turmoil of coordinating the international schedule, these attempts were pre-empted through the FAA.

The cargo 747 departed Whitehorse first at approximately 1:30 p.m. Wednesday Sept.13th. The passenger aircraft departed at 4:10 p.m. that afternoon.

Condor Air Flight DE2066 departed Whitehorse at 1:00 p.m. bound for Anchorage Alaska.

During the time of the airspace restriction, many civilian aircraft were away from their home bases. Some were out at bush camps with hunting parties; some were grounded at other airports. Civilian pilots did not report problems in relation to the airspace restrictions either during or immediately following the events of Sept.11th.

Post Event Activities

Directly following the Sept. 11th airport emergency, all response agencies involved met to de-brief how the event was handled. A compulsory activity that takes place directly following every emergency event, the de-briefing takes a critical view of what went right and what went wrong in delivering the response. These issues can be found in the Difficulties Encountered section of this report.

Counseling sessions were conducted for Yukon government staff who wished this service in the days following Sept. 11th. In these sessions staff made many observations about perceived failures in the emergency response. While primarily conducted to help people deal with the trauma of the terrorist attacks, many issues were raised relating to evacuating government buildings and the lack of posted safety information.

Through the course of these sessions, many gave their views on how the local emergency was handled from their perspective. Many recommendations came from these sessions that could help improve emergency preparedness and response. Topics such as improving information protocols, essential staffing designations, the need for public address systems, emergency training requirements and similar suggestions were provided by government employees towards improving emergency preparedness.

Over and above the de-briefing sessions with response agencies, local radio media also participated in de-briefing sessions to gain their viewpoints on how improvements can be made in advising their audiences of emergency situations and the actions they are recommended to follow. To this end, Yukon response agencies, EMB and local media will be forming an Emergency Information Committee to deal with making improvements to emergency information processes. Technical issues such as multi-casting emergency announcements and rural community situations will be reviewed to streamline the initial announcements to the public during emergency situations.

This committee will implement emergency information announcements such as pertinent evacuation procedures, recommended safety precautions and related topics designed to provide the listening audience with the information they need during crisis situations.

All government departments, as well as federal and municipal agencies are presently reviewing their emergency procedures to ensure they are up-to-date and current with new potential emergencies that may occur in the Yukon in relation to global events.

Within the Yukon government, the Occupational Health and Safety branch is helping departments to improve their individual safety procedures for building evacuations, on-site safety issues, first aid personnel and reviewing safety training requirements for staff.

Community and Transportation Services (C&TS) is reviewing a number of topic areas related to the movement of people and products into and out of the territory with the goal of ensuring the security and integrity of Yukon's transportation systems.

New federal air travel regulations regarding security of passengers and airports are being coordinated with the Yukon government agencies responsible for implementing them.

In response to the current Anthrax situation, safety and security procedures have been implemented for the handling of mail in government offices. Rubber gloves and facemasks have been issued with training to staff that handle mail in the regular course of their jobs.

Across the nation, chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear counter terrorism training is being developed and coordinated through a variety of agencies involved with emergency response.

Security procedures are being reviewed with the goal of ensuring increased confidence in government information systems, infrastructure and mechanical systems and the ability for the continuation of critical government programs and services during emergency situations.

The Department of Education and all Yukon schools are reviewing their emergency plans and communication options with the goal of confirming their plans are effective and to provide better information regarding emergency planning to parents and guardians.

In order to help Yukoners better prepare for emergencies that may occur; a territory-wide information campaign will be launched to provide our citizens with what they need to know in order to protect themselves and their families. Emergency planning information will also be available to business owners, First Nations and visitors.

Other multi-agency response de-briefing meetings such as the Arctic Security Interdepartmental Working Group met in Yellowknife on security and response issues for the entire North.

Deficiencies Encountered

The emergency situation surrounding Sept. 11th was unique in the history of Yukon's emergency events. We have never before had to deal with the extra-ordinary requirements needed to undertake the emergency response that day. While this emergency situation was new for the Yukon, established emergency plans were followed in delivering the response.

Some difficulties occurred in carrying out the response, but these were primarily related to the compressed timeframe within which the agencies had to react rather than the response process that was used.

The initial situation for the Yukon was the potential for possibly ten wide-body aircraft to be diverted to Whitehorse Airport as a result of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) closing American airspace.

This in itself did not constitute an emergency for the Yukon, as there are plans in place to deal with diverted aircraft. The principal concern at that time was what to do with potentially five thousand passengers coming to Whitehorse from a variety of foreign lands.

Analysis of the response delivered on Sept. 11th revealed that the primary difficulty encountered was due to the compressed timeframe within which all the agencies had to act. Initial information indicated a one hour estimated time to arrival for the suspect aircraft. There was conflicting information from another agency that estimated the arrival of the suspect aircraft at twelve minutes. Faced with this conflict in arrival estimates, the RCMP opted to utilize the twelve-minute timeframe to guide their actions.

Within this timeframe, the RCMP had to:

- determine a response activity plan
- identify and advise potential high-risk building targets, such as schools and government buildings, of the potential threat and recommend building evacuations immediately and by whatever means available
- prepare for the arrival of the two aircraft
- ensure security measures were in place and functioning at the Whitehorse Airport
- coordinate security perimeters and traffic checkpoints around the airport
- liaise with the City of Whitehorse, EMO, airport management and other agencies
- advise local media and the public of the situation

Deficiencies

Due to the very short response timeframe, the City of Whitehorse did not have time to fully implement their Emergency Measures Plan. The plan was initiated, but stood down as the City Hall was ordered to evacuate. An emergency event of this type would normally fall initially to the municipality's responsibility for response. As incoming

information on the situation was changing rapidly and the time to act was shrinking, RCMP maintained the operational lead for the response activities.

Public Information

Evacuations

A principal difficulty encountered at this time of the emergency event was to ensure the public was advised of the rapidly changing situation through the local radio stations. RCMP was the lead agency and as such provided the role of public information through our local media. EMO communications acted as support to RCMP in collecting and sharing information among the responding agencies and in a backup role for media inquiries.

Initial public information announcements were focused on communicating that school children were being evacuated from their schools and sent home. A phone number for Department of Education was also provided should parents require further information. This announcement was faxed to all local media outlets. Live interviews with RCMP communications staff was also utilized at the early stages to add greater detail and to respond to questions from media reporters.

Throughout the morning RCMP spokespersons were interviewed live on local radio stations with updates as they occurred. RCMP provided updates to each radio station individually which contributed to a slower than required information flow to the public.

Public reaction to the announcement of the incoming aircraft was witnessed as confirming the safety of children and themselves. As a result, many parents left their regular daytime locations and went to schools to collect their children. Many parents were unaware of alternate safety locations as prescribed in individual school emergency plans creating increased confusion and frustration for many of these parents.

Telephone switchboards at the schools, local media and government departments were flooded with calls from parents seeking information on alternate safety locations for students.

The selective evacuation of certain buildings in the downtown area contributed to public confusion as many assumed there was an official order to evacuate the City's downtown core. Local media also contributed to increased public tension by incorrectly assuming a general evacuation notice had been issued.

RCMP did correct local media outlets to advise the public that a general evacuation order had not been issued and urged the public to remain calm and safe in their movements out of town.

Providing relevant information to local media outlets posed a challenge, as there was not a significant level of information that would benefit citizens in the early stages. In basic terms, the priority information was that an emergency event was underway; school

children have been evacuated from schools; and selected government buildings are being evacuated; remain calm and stay turned to local radio stations for updates.

Until the aircraft had landed and investigations concluded, there was not much more information that could be provided to the public related to the aircraft or the hijacking situation at that time.

It is recognized that a better job could have been done in providing the public with information on transportation options, traffic conditions and recommended routes out of the downtown area. Alternate emergency locations for schools could have been broadcast, but this brings other security issues to light. Discussions are taking place with the Department of Education, individual schools and emergency planners to find the optimum solution to this situation.

A measure of the public's desire for more information is through telephone activity to a multitude of agencies and media outlets. Northwestel advised local media that their telephone network was becoming strained due to the increased level of caller traffic.

Radio stations as well as the City Fire Department and government departments all received calls in considerable volume from the public for more information on the immediate situation.

Many requests for information were about the immediate local situation and the recommended procedures to follow: "...What is the most effective route out of the downtown?" ...Is it really a hijacked plane?"...What should I do?" ...Where are my children being taken?"

Other callers asked questions that could not be answered due to a lack of that information available at that time: "...How many hijackers are on board? " ...Who authorized the planes to be sent here? "...Will regular airline schedules be in place tomorrow?"

Media

As local tensions were influenced by the terrorist attacks in the United States, imaginations were also stimulated to anticipate an escalation of the pending situation here.

The public relied on local radio media for information and reacted literally to observations made by some radio commentators. Some of these comments were speculative and incorrect which contributed to the public's state of unease.

Some local radio media contributed to increased public concern through a flurry of anecdotal reports based on observations of response activities underway. Rather than dispelling public fear, emotions were increased by assumptions and speculation as well as the underlying urgency that flavoured their reporting.

While not a fault of local media exclusively, national programming in both Canada and the U.S., by all mainstream media, fanned public tension as their reporting covered a wide-range of speculation, unconfirmed reports, anecdotal observations and emotionally-charged stories and visual images. All of these influences were a major contributing factor to the public state of concern and anxiety.

Through an informal process following Sept. 11th, some Whitehorse citizens were asked their impressions of how the local media performed their coverage of the emergency and what value it provided to them during the event. Virtually all said they relied exclusively on one of the three local radio stations for information on the emergency.

Some listeners said they would have liked more tangible information on the status of road closures and exit routes out of Whitehorse. Some felt that information on the alternate school locations should have been provided.

The issue of evacuating the downtown core and whether an official evacuation order had been made prompted many comments that a better job could have been done in advising the entire community about what the evacuation situation really was.

Many listeners said they received all the information they needed to take care of their immediate needs in relation to the safety of themselves and their family. Others said they would have liked more detailed information as the situation was unfolding, but at the same time recognized that there was not a lot of information available as things were happening very quickly.

While some listeners said they thought our media did a good job of covering the event, others are more critical of the approach media took in covering this emergency. Some felt that there was too much excitement by media in their coverage of the emergency and the element of added drama was not appropriate. Some said they felt that media increased public tension in the course of their reporting of these events.

Since Sept. 11th, increased attention to North American media reporting and over-sensationalizing of reports has been the focus of many media-watch groups and individuals. On-going coverage of terrorism threats and the potential for new threats have been criticized for promoting public fear and uncertainty. Many media outlets have chosen not to air footage of the World Trade Center destruction and similar images in an effort to reduce public anxiety and fear.

The on-going coverage of the Anthrax threat has re-kindled criticism of media over-sensationalizing these issues and promoting greater unease in the public domain.

The media have a difficult task in providing the news in an accurate and informative fashion in an increasingly competitive marketplace. Recognizing there is a wide spectrum of public opinion on how the media perform their role; some people are content with how media performs, while others are critical of how they conduct themselves when reporting on emotionally charged issues.

Some Yukoners were not aware of the emergency situation when it was underway because they do not regularly listen to local media. It is expected that many Whitehorse citizens operate in an 'information-free zone' in their homes and workplaces during the daytime. If radio stations are not being listened to, and nobody phones these people to let them know an emergency is underway, these people are effectively removed from knowing the situation and how they should respond.

Evacuation of Buildings

Problems were encountered due to the short timeframe within which to advise Whitehorse schools to evacuate. Normally, the Department of Education would take the lead and coordinate the orderly evacuation of Yukon schools. As time was short, the RCMP contacted the Department of Education as well as the individual school administrators to recommend they evacuate. Many parents were unaware of alternate locations for their children following a school evacuation, which contributed to confusion and increased frustration.

Radio media incorrectly stated that the Whitehorse General Hospital had been evacuated when in fact the hospital was under alert in accordance with their emergency plans.

Evacuation of the federal and territorial government buildings created some problems in that a uniform evacuation order was not made throughout the buildings due to the lack of public address systems. Many staff did not hear of an evacuation notice until they witnessed co-workers leaving the buildings. As a result, many did not leave the buildings as they should have.

Some were critical of the RCMP for issuing a selective evacuation of certain buildings. Many of these people felt that the buildings they work in should have been evacuated as well as the noted government and school buildings. Others felt a general citywide evacuation should have been issued.

Decisions for selecting specific buildings to evacuate were based on target and risk identification in light of the actions of the terrorists in the USA and what may be readily identifiable from the air.

Many government staff were unaware of the emergency procedures they are supposed to follow when instructed to evacuate their workplaces. This alone may be the largest reason for the experiences of government staff on that day. Most did not know their role during emergency situations or how they should react to emergency situations in the workplace.

Some private business operators elected to close their businesses and sent their staff home to attend to children and personal needs.

Transportation

Traffic congestion on routes out of the city increased dramatically as people left the downtown core en masse. City of Whitehorse Bylaw and RCMP directed traffic in key

locations such as the Robert Campbell Bridge to Riverdale and the intersection of Industrial and Quartz Roads although traffic problems were also experienced at other intersections in the city.

The closing of the Alaska Highway between South Access and Two-Mile Hill effectively closed access to the Hillcrest and neighboring regions of the city. This frustrated many citizens as they were prevented from returning to their homes and family while the highway was closed. Some parents were unable to reach their children at daycare facilities located in this region of Whitehorse.

The use of City Transit buses for transportation during the emergency posed a major problem for regular users of the City Transit system. The transit system was withdrawn from public use from 10:10 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. as the buses were re-tasked with moving school students and airline passengers. The total fleet of nine buses was used in this response. Regular transit users were forced to use cabs or find a ride from family and friends.

Private Sector and Individual Emergency Plans

The September 11th emergency highlighted the lack of emergency planning at the individual level. It is apparent that many families and businesses do not have plans in place to deal with emergency situations that may occur.

As the emergency event took place on a weekday, the majority of citizens were at work or performing their regular daily tasks. Children were in schools and for the most part, the regular activity patterns of Whitehorse residents carried on as normal. Had this emergency taken place on a weekend, a completely different situation would have unfolded.

Children would not have been in schools, but rather they could have been in a number of different locations throughout the city without their parents or guardians. Government buildings, while officially closed for business, still have staff at work in various capacities. Greater numbers of people would be in commercial buildings without the knowledge of evacuation plans for that location. A greater number of people would be at cabins and similar rural locations without communications or the ability to get in touch with others during an emergency. In short, a completely different situation would exist in responding to community needs during an emergency on a weekend.

While government agencies and responders are reviewing and updating emergency plans, individual citizens, businesses, commercial property owners and others should also consider developing emergency plans so that in the event of an emergency, they and their families, customers and tenants know what to do to maintain their safety and security.

National Security Interests and Public Information

Another difficulty was discovered through the creation of this report. International and national agencies have policies on disclosing information to the public on procedural and or operational practices that may be considered sensitive or secret.

The question of why this potentially dangerous aircraft was directed to Whitehorse rather than another airport remains unanswered by senior national agencies, (FAA, NORAD, Transport Canada). Given the international security protocols presently in place due to potential terrorism activity, many of these agencies have become even more cryptic in their public information, especially to requests for information regarding terrorism activities. As a result, questions about the decision-making process to re-direct the two Korean aircraft to Whitehorse have not been answered in any significant detail. It is expected that greater detail on this event will not be forthcoming from these agencies in the short-term.

Successes

In many respects the Whitehorse Airport emergency of Sept. 11th had many successes. Measured in basic terms, no lives were lost and no injuries were sustained during the entire event. A great many people's lives were disrupted for a few hours as a result of the emergency situation, yet for the most part, the people of Whitehorse conducted themselves in a model fashion given the increased anxiety and rapidly changing circumstances between 10 a.m. and noon of that day.

As the Yukon had never previously been tested in a situation such as this, the response delivered by all agencies was professional, safe and methodically carried out. The inter-agency teamwork during this emergency situation demonstrated the value of previous emergency planning and exercises. All agencies worked well together given the circumstances of dealing with a unique, new emergency situation.

From the perspective of many of the response agencies involved, the single most successful element of Sept. 11th was the recognition that more attention needs to be paid to emergency planning by all levels of government, business, media and our citizens.

As world events bring greater uncertainty to many areas of our lives, collectively we need to improve how we prepare for and respond to emergency situations wherever and whenever they occur in the Yukon.

The most noteworthy success was the quality of the care and comfort for the passengers of the two Korean Airlines aircraft. These people did not know of the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington at the time they arrived in Whitehorse. Many of these passengers were destined to complete their journey in New York.

Emergency Health and Social Services and numerous volunteers cared for the passengers from the moment they stepped off the plane until they departed from Whitehorse. Many of the passengers were extremely unsettled by what they learned of the attacks in New York City and Washington as some were residents of New York and had friends and family there. One of the first tasks for the ESS staff was to assure the passengers that they were out of danger and would be cared for while they were here.

An international flight with passengers speaking a total of five different languages posed a real communication challenge. Language barriers were overcome with the assistance of Whitehorse residents who provided translation services when they are required. Many local translators helped passengers who were struggling to deal with the events in New York and Washington as some had family and friends in these locations.

The Salvation Army donated clothing because the people on board the aircraft did not have their baggage. All baggage remained on board the aircraft as a security precaution.

Five local hotels provided accommodation for the passengers which encouraged many of the 'accidental tourists' to take in local sites and attractions during their stay.

In light of the unfortunate circumstance that brought them here, many passengers have written to provide their thanks to the people of Whitehorse for the quality of care and the thoughtfulness with which they were treated during their stay.

There is also success in failure. While the failure of something is normally considered a negative, learning why something failed and the impacts this failure brings to a process can be considered a success. An example of this is the local cell phone service. As greater demands were placed on the cell phone network by more and more users during the morning of Sept. 11th, the ability to make or receive calls diminished to the point of system failure for about an hour. This dramatically impacted inter-agency communications.

While no fault of the cell phone system or the management of it, the reliability of the system becomes a Catch-22 situation in that it works so well other subscribers place additional demands on it making it an unreliable tool for response agencies during emergency events.

During de-briefing sessions with the agencies it was acknowledged that alternate communications systems may need to be employed to ensure effective emergency communications.

The successes of Sept. 11th lie in the fact that we have learned from the experience and improvements to emergency response plans are being made as a result. While many of these improvements are minor adjustments to how responses are carried out, collectively they provide for a smoother, more efficient response capability that will serve Yukoners in the future.

Recommendations

Based on the events of September 11th, and the continuing "new threat environment", there are a number of primary recommendations that should be considered to improve Yukon's emergency preparedness overall.

It is recommended that:

1. *Internal government communication protocols and procedures be fully developed and conveyed to all staff and elected officials.*

2. *Management representatives of local media be included as part of the Yukon's emergency planning "team".*

3. *EMO increase public awareness of emergency threats and how the public can better prepare for emergency situations in their homes and workplaces.*

4. *All levels of government, agencies and businesses make a greater commitment towards emergency planning and preparedness.*

5. *Integrated emergency telecommunications training be developed and delivered to all response agencies.*

6. *All levels of government promote recruitment of emergency response volunteers in communities and develop a greater integration of these through a combined administrative function.*

7. *An inventory of language translators and other specialty services be created that may be required for emergency response and training.*

8. *Occupational Health and Safety Committees be re-invigorated in both the private and public sectors to address local building and work site emergency plans and procedures.*

9. *Plans for the relocation of school students during emergencies be clarified and communicated to parents and/or guardians.*

10. *A wide area public alerting system be established for the Whitehorse area that can provide members of the public with emergency notification.*

There are also a number of procedural and managerial recommendations that have been provided to improve Yukon government's internal emergency protocols. Many of these deal with improving information to staff about emergency awareness and departmental responsibilities during emergency situations.

1. *Implement building-wide alerting systems such as public address systems for emergency situations.*

2. *Identify essential roles and responsibilities during emergency situations by department.*

3. *Develop regular emergency drills for government buildings and more emergency training for staff.*

4. *Refine department emergency plans to the individual level so each person knows what they are supposed to do.*

5. *Create a single information source in government to answer questions that may come up regarding an emergency situation.*

Additional Recommendations

There are many more recommendations that are not included here but will be reviewed and implemented as appropriate to support the established emergency plans.

Yukoners are also invited to submit their suggestions on how emergency preparedness and response can be improved.

In months to come, there will be increased opportunity to discuss emergency preparedness at the community level as the Emergency Measures Branch will be conducting a broad information campaign to assist Yukon families, businesses and First Nations with developing emergency plans to ensure their continued safety during crisis situations.

Next Steps

Identifying improvements to emergency preparedness and response capability is an on-going process. As noted earlier, event de-briefings are a fundamental part of each emergency event. A continual effort is made to increase awareness to prevent emergencies from happening and simultaneously, response procedures are improved to provide faster, more effective emergency responses when they are required.

The response analysis of the airport emergency of Sept. 11th has indicated a number of improvements that can be made in dealing with similar situations in the future. A good number of these improvements are in the process of being implemented. Topics such as streamlined communications procedures for critical agencies and local radio media; ensuring parents of school children are informed of school emergency plans in advance of an emergency situation; and procedural improvements to be implemented between response agencies will effect faster response capabilities under compressed timeframes.

Many valuable suggestions have been made by the agencies directly involved. We also need to hear from the public about improvements they believe can be made to emergency preparedness and response.

If you have comments or suggestions on the response that was provided during Sept. 11th or if you have suggestions on how to improve emergency preparedness in general, please submit your suggestions to:

Emergency Measures
Government of Yukon
Box 2703
Whitehorse, Yukon
Y1A 2C6
Toll Free 1 800 661-0408 ext. 5220
Phone: 867 667-5220
Fax: 867 393-6266
Email: emo.yukon@gov.yk.ca

In communities, contact your local Emergency Measures Coordinator.

Watson Lake	Hilda Price	867 536-7778
Teslin	Robert Gareau	867 390-2530
Carmacks	Luke Lacasse	867 863-6271
Faro	David Skidd	867 994-2728
Whitehorse	Bill Newell	867 668-8650
Mayo	Margrit Wozniak	867 996-2317
Dawson City	John Mitchell	867 993-5220
Haines Junction	Colin Dean	867 634-7100

September 11, 2001 Chronological Overview

This chronology is combined from event records of Cable News Network (CNN), the City of Whitehorse, Whitehorse RCMP, Transport Canada, Yukon EMO and Alaska EMO.

All times accurate to within ± three minutes for timepiece variance.
All times have been converted to Pacific Standard (local) time

5:45 a.m.: A hijacked passenger jet, American Airlines Flight 11 out of Boston, Massachusetts, crashes into the north tower of the World Trade Center, tearing a gaping hole in the building and setting it afire.

6:03 a.m.: A second hijacked airliner, United Airlines Flight 175 from Boston, crashes into the south tower of the World Trade Center and explodes. Both buildings are burning.

6:17 a.m.: The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) shuts down all New York City area airports.

6:21 a.m.: The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey orders all bridges and tunnels in the New York area closed.

6:21 a.m.: Transport Canada Situation Centre, Ottawa, activated

6:30 a.m.: President Bush, speaking in Sarasota, Florida, says the country has suffered an "apparent terrorist attack."

6:40 a.m.: The FAA halts all flight operations at U.S. airports, the first time in U.S. history that air traffic nationwide has been halted.

6:43 a.m.: American Airlines Flight 77 crashes into the Pentagon, sending up a huge plume of smoke. Evacuation begins immediately.

6:45 a.m.: The White House evacuates.

6:52 a.m.: Canadian media reports indicate that all US airports are closed.

6:55 a.m.: FAA confirms that all US airports are closed.

6:57 a.m.: Bush departs from Florida.

7:03 a.m.: Extra measures ordered by Transport Canada, Security and Emergency Preparedness. Access airside restricted to permanent pass holders. All vehicles proceeding airside are to be searched. All commercial flights to USA banned.

7:05 a.m.: The south tower of the World Trade Center collapses, plummeting into the streets below.

7:08 a.m.: Secret Service agents armed with automatic rifles are deployed into Lafayette Park across from the White House.

7:09 a.m.: NAV CANADA instructed to shut down operations in Canadian airspace. No international flights out of Canada, however incoming flights may land.

7:10 a.m.: A portion of the Pentagon collapses.

7:10 a.m.: United Airlines Flight 93, also hijacked, crashes in Somerset County, Pennsylvania, southeast of Pittsburgh.

7:12 a.m.: Notice received confirming Transport Canada, Deputy Minister has shut down the Canadian Air Navigation System, that commercial flights out of Canada are prohibited and that inbound flights to Canada will be allowed to land.

7:13 a.m.: The United Nations building evacuates, including 4,700 people from the headquarters building and 7,000 total from UNICEF and U.N. development programs.

7:22 a.m.: In Washington D.C., the State and Justice departments are evacuated, along with the World Bank.

7:24 a.m.: The FAA reports that all inbound transatlantic aircraft flying into the United States are being diverted to Canada.

7:28 a.m.: The World Trade Center's north tower collapses releasing a tremendous cloud of debris and smoke.

8:17 a.m.: Transport Canada notice issued: "Due to reasons of safety, all departure services from NAV CANADA served aerodromes are ceased effective immediately. Due to closure of US airports and airspace all North Atlantic traffic is to be recovered in Canada. This action will be reviewed at 9:00 a.m. PST."

9:24 a.m.: Message from Transport Canada Security and Emergency Preparedness requiring all USA destined aircraft diverted to Canadian airports to be deplaned at airport terminal building isolation areas where all passengers, checked baggage and carry-on baggage is to be searched by police.

9:42 a.m. RCMP advised Emergency Measures Branch (EMB) and Emergency Social Services (ESS) of the potential inbound aircraft. ESS began planning to prepare for the arrival of a large number of travelers.

9:45 a.m. Whitehorse RCMP advised Premier Duncan of the situation as it existed at that time.

10:00 a.m. Anchorage downtown area ordered partial evacuation due to suspected hijacked Korean Airlines 747.

10:00 a.m. City of Whitehorse receives request from Whitehorse Airport for buses.

Condor Air Flight # 2066 arrives on schedule. 9 crewmembers and 143 passengers disembark and proceed through Canada Customs.

10:20 a.m. Whitehorse Airport was advised that as many as ten diverted flights may be arriving in Whitehorse in the next few hours.

10:25 a.m. Whitehorse RCMP were informed by Winnipeg RCMP of information received from 17 Wing Airforce - Department of National Defense (DND) that Korean Airline's flight 085 was indicating a hijack situation and that more information was forthcoming.

10:30 a.m. City of Whitehorse Bylaw requested by RCMP to report to airport for traffic control.

10:35 a.m.: Whitehorse RCMP advised by Department of National Defense of a potentially hijacked Korean Airlines 747 en route to Whitehorse airport.

10:45 a.m.: Whitehorse RCMP advised by NORAD of two Korean Airlines 747s en route to Whitehorse airport under USA and Canadian military aircraft escort. Aircraft are 400 miles away and **estimated time to arrival - one hour.**

10:50 a.m. Premier Duncan was updated on activities underway.

10:55 a.m.: Whitehorse RCMP advised by Transport Canada of potential hijacked Korean Airlines 747 en route to Whitehorse airport. **Estimated time to arrival – twelve minutes.**

10:58 a.m. Premier Duncan was again advised of the rapidly changing situation. RCMP noted they were calling Whitehorse schools recommending evacuation of these. The Whitehorse General Hospital was also put on alert.

11:00 a.m. Whitehorse Mayor Ernie Bourassa advised by RCMP of the situation underway and directed to evacuate City Hall. City Manger implements the City Emergency Plan, activates the Emergency Operations Centre and commences the alert process.

11:05 a.m. City manager contacts EMB to determine if the Yukon Government has declared an emergency. EMB informs City manager that YTG has not yet declared an emergency, but is prepared to. EMB is evacuating their location next to the airport and will be re-locating to the airport emergency operations

centre and will advise. As City Hall was being evacuated at that time, City EOC activities ceased and building is evacuated.

11:09 a.m. City Fire department Station #2 responds to airport to support Airport Fire Department with pending aircraft arrival. Additional fire fighters were called in to attend to the stations and front line operations.

11:13 a.m.: Transport Canada Winnipeg advises Whitehorse RCMP they received report from Transport Canada Situation Centre, Ottawa. Korean flight 085 inbound from Korea has been hijacked and is near Whitehorse.

11:15 a.m. NORAD advises Whitehorse Airport aircraft was 150 miles away.

11:17 a.m. DND Winnipeg advised RCMP the hijacked aircraft is Korean Airlines KAL Flight 085 with 250 passengers onboard.

11:20 a.m.: NORAD advised Whitehorse RCMP that inbound Korean Airlines 747 was **not** a hijacking, but rather a low-fuel alert.

11:29 a.m.: NORAD called Whitehorse RCMP and advised inbound Korean Airlines 747 **was** a suspected hijacking with a low-fuel alert.

11:43 a.m. Korean Airlines cargo aircraft HL 7462 lands safely. The aircraft is directed to the terminal apron and ordered to shutdown. Flight crew remains onboard under direction of RCMP.

11:54 a.m. Korean Airlines HL 7464 flight 085 lands safely. The aircraft is directed to the northern most portion of the apron and is ordered to shut down.

12:00 p.m. RCMP report both planes safely landed and under security watch. Live media interviews with RCMP state that the immediate danger has passed as the planes are on the ground. The public is further advised that the airport and Alaska Highway will remain closed until further notice.

12:02 p.m.: Report received from NAV CANADA that Korean flight 085 landed safely at Whitehorse.

12:07 p.m.: NAV CANADA advises two Korean Airlines aircraft landed safely at Whitehorse at 11:41 a.m. and 11:52 a.m. complete with military escort. Miscommunication cited as the reason for the false hijack reporting by one of the pilots.

12:07 p.m. RCMP maintains visual surveillance of the two aircraft while communications between the Whitehorse Airport control tower and the aircraft attempt to gain further information on the status within the aircraft.

12:22 p.m. A mobile staircase ramp is moved to the forward door of the passenger aircraft. The pilot of the aircraft advises nothing is wrong and that RCMP is welcome aboard to confirm the situation.

12:52 p.m. The pilot exits the aircraft and is removed to a separate location for de-briefing. Confusion or misinterpreted communications between the aircraft and FAA are assumed to be the reason behind the false hijack alert.

2:10 p.m. RCMP in discussion with other responding agencies agreed that no further airport evacuation order was required to continue. Airport and Alaska Highway reopened.

3:00 p.m. The passengers were then moved to the Beringia Centre for an information session.

September 12, 2001

03:00 a.m. RCMP brought in a bomb-sniffing dog from Vancouver to search the two 747 aircraft. Cargo within the two aircraft was also searched and revealed no threat.

05:00 a.m. RCMP confirmed that a hijacking situation did not exist on either of the two aircraft. Both aircraft were security cleared and approved to depart after FAA and Transport Canada airspace restrictions were lifted and scheduling requirements had been made.

5:24 a.m.: Transport Canada Situation Centre Ottawa conferred with Whitehorse RCMP on details regarding Korean flight.

September 13, 2001

1:30 p.m. The KAL HL 7462 cargo 747 departs Whitehorse.

4:10 p.m. The KAL HL 7464 passenger aircraft departs Whitehorse.